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NEWS RELEASE

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Siting Board Approves 60-MW Solar Project Proposed for Russell County

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov. 3, 2021) – The Kentucky State Board on Electric Generation and Transmission Siting (Siting Board) has approved, with modifications and conditions, an application from Mt. Olive Creek Solar, LLC, to construct a 60-megawatt (MW) solar facility in Russell County, Kentucky. The proposed 475-acre site is near the town of Russell Springs on land that has been in agricultural use.

Mt. Olive Creek Solar is a subsidiary of Carolina Solar Energy III, LLC, based in Durham, North Carolina. The project will interconnect to an existing transmission line owned by East Kentucky Power Cooperative located on the proposed site, with power from the project expected to be sold into the regional wholesale market operated by PJM Interconnection.

Mt. Olive Creek submitted its application, including the required Site Assessment Report, on May 12, 2021. Mt. Olive Creek published notice of the proposed facility in the local newspaper. Mt. Olive Creek also notified landowners whose property borders the proposed facility. As required by statute, Mt. Olive Creek conducted public outreach prior to filing its application, including public meetings conducted on Aug. 6 and Oct. 8, 2020. These meetings were conducted virtually, but an in-person option would have been provided upon request.

The Siting Board conducted a site visit on July 27; a local, in-person, public meeting on Sept. 15; and a formal hearing on Sept. 28.

As authorized by statute, the Siting Board retained a consultant to review Mt. Olive Creek's Site Assessment Report and proposed mitigation measures. The Site Assessment Report, per statute, must contain a detailed site description of the proposed facility, as well as potential impacts to surrounding property both during construction and operation post-construction. In addition to evaluation of the factors contained in the Site Assessment Report, KRS 278.710(1) directs the Siting Board to consider the following criteria in making a decision:

- Economic impact on the affected region and state;
- Existence of other generation facilities;
- Local planning and zoning requirements;
- Potential impact on the electricity transmission system;
- Compliance with statutory setback requirements; and
- History of environmental compliance

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Mt. Olive Creek Solar estimates approximately 150 full-time employees will be hired during the 8-12 month construction phase of the project. Most of these positions will be craft workers and contractors. The operational phase of the project will require two to three employees. Based on the review of the evidence provided in the case, the Siting Board has determined the solar project will have a positive economic impact in the region.

The Siting Board has authorized a deviation from the 2,000 feet statutory setback requirements, with setback requirements from adjoining neighborhoods and setbacks from noise-emitting facility equipment as specified in the Order.

Among the conditions and mitigation measures, Mt. Olive Creek Solar must:

- Submit for review a final site layout plan upon its completion, with changes in proposed project boundaries and location of solar facility equipment clearly indicated;
- Provide final project-specific construction schedule;
- Maintain, as practicable, existing vegetation between solar arrays and nearby roadways and homes;
- Plant native evergreen species as a visual buffer, particularly in adjacent areas that currently do not have vegetation;
- Cultivate at least 2 acres of pollinator-friendly species onsite;
- Develop a traffic management plan to minimize impacts and ensure safety and compliance with state and local road permit, truck weight, and other requirements;
- Limit construction activity between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday;
- Within one month prior to the start of construction, notify residents and businesses within 2,400 feet of the project boundary regarding the construction plan;
- Deploy noise suppression methods during pile driving activity that occurs within 1,500 feet of a residence or other noise-sensitive receptor;
- Place high voltage warning signs along the perimeter of the site and at all entrances and control access to the site during construction and operation;
- Obtain necessary permits if there are wetland or stream disturbances during construction;
- Implement a Customer Resolution Program;
- File its full decommissioning plan with the Siting Board. The decommissioning plan must be completed at least one month before construction begins and must commit Mt. Olive Creek to removing all solar facility components, above and below ground (regardless of depth);
- File a bond equal to the amount necessary to carry out the decommissioning plan, naming Russell County as a beneficiary. The bond amount shall be reviewed every five years at Mt. Olive Creek's expense to provide any updates to the cost of decommissioning;
- Provide to the Siting Board and Russell County Fiscal Court any transfers of ownership or control of the project; and
- Follow applicable laws regarding disposal or recycling of facility equipment during operations or decommissioning.

More details on mitigation measures and conditions are contained in an appendix to today's Order. The Siting Board found that Mt. Olive Creek Solar met the requirements of KRS 278.710(1) so long as Mt. Olive Creek Solar complies with these mitigation measures and conditions.

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The Siting Board consists of the three members of the Public Service Commission, the secretary of the Kentucky Energy and Environmental Cabinet or a designee, the secretary of the Kentucky Economic Development Cabinet or a designee and two local members appointed by the governor to serve for a specific case. The chairman of the PSC serves as chairman of the Siting Board.

The two local members for Mt. Olive Creek Solar are Jeff Hoover, of Jamestown, representing residents of Russell County, and Gary D. Robertson, Jamestown, Russell County Judge Executive, representing Russell County.

The Siting Board is headquartered at the PSC and PSC staff also serves as staff to the Siting Board. The Siting Board's operations are funded through fees paid by applicants. The complete application, a description of the review process, mitigation measures and conditions, public comments, and other case filings are available at <https://psc.ky.gov/Case/ViewCaseFilings/2020-00226>.

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